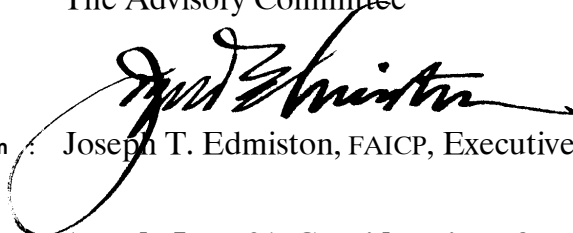


Memorandum

To : The Conservancy
The Advisory Committee

Date: July 28, 2003

From :  Joseph T. Edmiston, FAICP, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 21: Consideration of resolution authorizing a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority to acquire approximately 11 acres (Holland property) APNs 2826-025-002 and 016, adjacent to Santa Clarita Woodlands Park/East Canyon, unincorporated Newhall area.**

Staff Recommendation: That the Conservancy authorize a grant of Proposition 40 funds to the Mountains Recreation and Conservation Authority (MRCA) to acquire approximately 11 acres (Holland property) APNs 2826-025-002 and 016, adjacent to the Santa Clarita Woodlands Park/East Canyon, unincorporated Newhall area.

Legislative Authority: Joint Exercise Powers Act, Section 6500 *et seq.* of the Government Code; and Section 33204 of the Public Resources Code.

Background: This property at 23849 The Old Road in Newhall is a relatively level to sloping 11.97 acre parcel immediately to the north of the MRCA ownership at 23801 The Old Road. The 23801 property at the mouth of East Canyon was purchased in 1990 from the owner of the subject property. The original acquisition was made to preserve the critical wildlife corridor chokepoint near Gavin Canyon and I-5. The Conservancy did not have the funds to purchase the entire ownership at that time, and negotiated with the owner, Mr. Rex Holland for the MRCA to purchase only the original 10 acres, leaving the 11.97 acre property as private land for a potential commercial site. The land is in unincorporated Los Angeles County and is zoned C-3, Commercial and R3P, Limited Multiple Residence. The entire parcel is within Los Angeles County Significant Ecological Area 20. It is within the Conservancy's Rim of the Valley Trail Corridor, and is included in the Santa Clarita Woodlands Park Feasibility Study conducted by the California Department of Parks and Recreation in 1990.

Although a portion of the property has some development with two structures (a 1948 small home and a 4000 sq. foot concrete block warehouse), the larger part of the property has very good resource value thick with coast live oak, California walnut woodland, and valley oak habitat. The site encompasses the lower portion and mouth of Leaming Canyon.

Mr. Holland is a willing seller at fair market value. The state Department of General Services has approved the appraisal value. Absent a sale to the MRCA, Mr Holland indicates that he will

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reactivate his plans to build a public storage facility on the property. Other allowable uses could be a church, retail, service, or office uses, or an auto, boat, or recreational vehicle sales facility.

In order to protect the adjacent parkland, wildlife habitat linkages, and viewshed from I-5, The Old Road, and adjoining parkland, staff recommends purchasing the Holland property and expand the East Canyon Park portion of the Santa Clarita Woodlands Park.

Acquisition details may be heard in closed session.